ISSUE

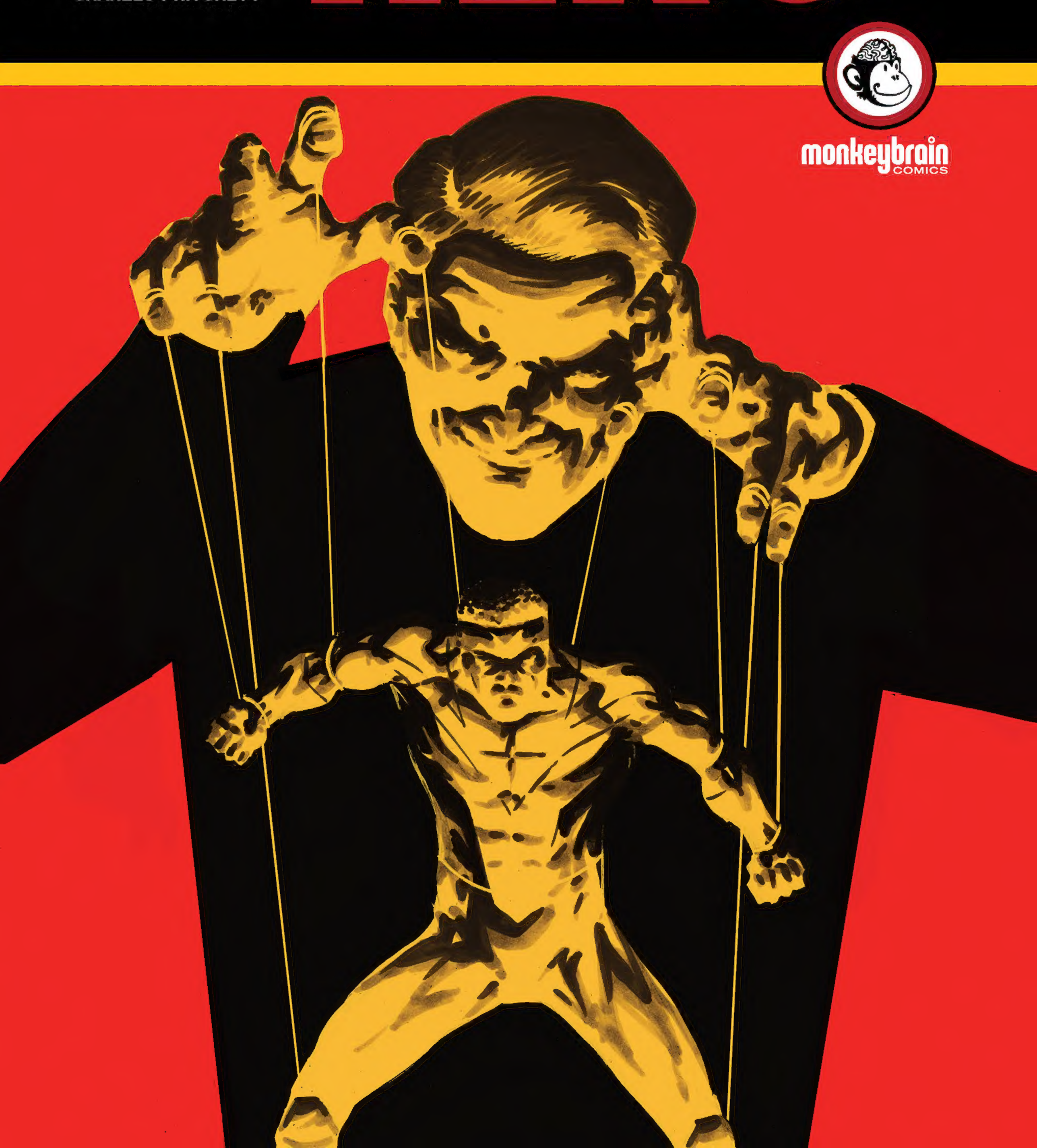
NO.#1

ANTI-HERO

ALWAYS
99¢

JAY FAERBER
NATE STOCKMAN
WITH
PAUL LITTLE
CHARLES PRITCHETT

monkeybrain
COMICS



ANTI-HERO

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ART BY NATE STOCKMAN

COLORS BY PAUL LITTTLE

LETTERS BY CHARLES PRITCHETT

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HE'S READY FOR YOU.

NICE KNOWIN' YA.

CALLUM.

HAVE A SEAT BY THE FIRE, LAD. DRY YOURSELF OFF.

I'M SORRY, MISTER QUINLAN.

DON'T APOLOGIZE. JUST TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED.

IT WENT DOWN JUST LIKE YOU SAID.

"ME AND THE GUYS, WE WERE ABLE TO INTERCEPT THE SHIPMENT, NO PROBLEM."

"THINGS DIDN'T GO SIDEWAYS UNTIL WE WERE ON THE BRIDGE."

LOOK OUT!

"IT WAS PARAGON. STANDING THERE LIKE HE WAS POSING FOR A PHOTO."

"THE GUYS TRIED TO FIGHT HIM OFF, BUT... WELL, YOU KNOW."

BBRRAPPP

AND WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU DIDN'T HELP YOUR CREW?

I...

"I TRIED, BUT..."

"...PARAGON THREW ME INTO THE DRINK."

AND THAT'S... WELL, THAT'S IT, I GUESS.

I REALLY DIDN'T WANT IT TO COME TO THIS.

I HAD BIG PLANS FOR YOU, CALLUM.

YOU MIGHT SAY I WAS *GROOMING* YOU.

I WANTED YOU TO TAKE ON MORE RESPONSIBILITY IN MY ORGANIZATION.

A LEADER--

--A TRUE LEADER--

--WOULD HAVE ANTICIPATED PARAGON'S INVOLVEMENT AND HAD A CONTINGENCY PLAN IN PLACE.

YOU THINK IT'S JUST *LUCK* THAT I'VE MANAGED TO STAY IN BUSINESS DESPITE THE PRESENCE OF THE CAPES AND THE JACKED-UP SUPER-VILLAINS THEY ATTRACT?

IT TAKES *SMARTS* TO STAY IN THIS BUSINESS. IT TAKES *INITIATIVE*.

YOU REALIZE I'VE KILLED PEOPLE FOR LESS THAN THIS, RIGHT?

YESSIR.

I'M GIVING YOU ONE MORE CHANCE.

SHOW ME SOMETHING.

CRRK

GASP

I'LL SHOW YOU SOMETHING, LIAM...

AMOUR
CAFE
AMOUR

SORRY. SORRY.
HENRY.
YOU'RE FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER THAN NORMAL.

WHAT'S GOOD HERE?
I'M NOT EATING.
OH. I JUST THOUGHT--

I KNOW WHAT YOU THOUGHT.
BUT IT'S OVER. WE'RE NOT HERE TO HAVE BREAKFAST TOGETHER.
YOU KNOW WHY WE'RE HERE.

APPLICATION FOR
Divorce

NAOMI...

DON'T.

YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE. OR SHOULD I SAY ***CHANCES***, BECAUSE YOU'VE CERTAINLY HAD MORE THAN ONE.

BUT YOU'VE LET US DOWN ONE TIME TOO MANY.

SO JUST... JUST SIGN THE PAPERS AND WE CAN ALL GET ON WITH OUR LIVES.

I WISH IT DIDN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.

ME TOO. I WISH YOU DIDN'T MISS THE KIDS' BIRTHDAYS, OR OUR ANNIVERSARY, OR WHEN ELLIE BROKE HER LEG.

YOU ALWAYS HAD SOME EXCUSE AND A PROMISE THAT IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN AGAIN.

BUT WE BOTH KNOW HOW MUCH YOUR PROMISES ARE WORTH, DON'T WE?

NOT EVER?

NOT EVER, NO.

BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE'RE NOT A FAMILY ANYMORE, HANK. I'LL STILL SEE YOU ALL THE TIME.

DOES THIS MEAN WE GET TWO CHRISTMASES? BECAUSE SOPHIE'S PARENTS ARE DIVORCED AND SHE GETS TO DO CHRISTMAS TWICE.

YES, ***ELLIE***. TWO CHRISTMASES.

AND I'M GOING TO GET A BIGGER PLACE TO LIVE, SO YOU'LL EACH HAVE YOUR OWN ROOM WHEN YOU COME TO VISIT.

BUT I WANT YOU TO LIVE WITH ***US***.

WHY'S MOM BEING SO MEAN?

IT'S...IT'S NOT YOUR MOTHER'S FAULT.

IT'S COMPLICATED, THAT'S ALL. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS THAT WE ***BOTH*** STILL LOVE YOU GUYS MORE THAN ANYTHING.

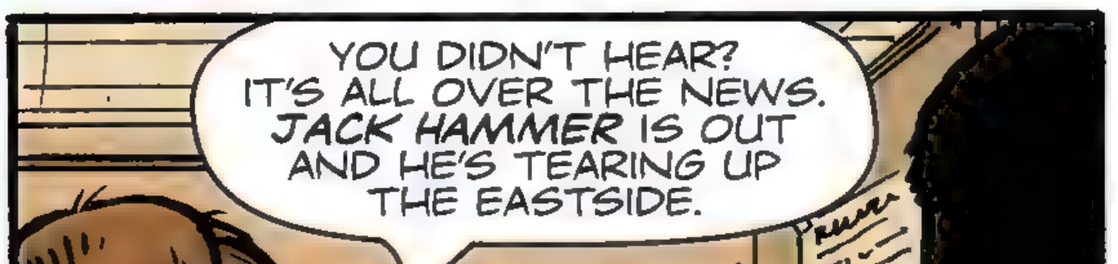
SPORTWAY

SUBLIME
ADVERTISING

LOOK WHO DECIDED TO JOIN US, EVERYONE.
I'M SORRY, ISSAC. I KNOW WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THIS, BUT I HAD SOME... FAMILY ISSUES.

OF COURSE. IF IT WASN'T FAMILY ISSUES, IT'D BE CAR TROUBLE. AND IF IT WASN'T CAR TROUBLE, IT'D BE YOUR BASEMENT FLOODED.
JUST GET TO WORK. WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS LATER.

HEY, GUYS. WHAT'S GOING ON?


YOU DIDN'T HEAR? IT'S ALL OVER THE NEWS. JACK HAMMER IS OUT AND HE'S TEARING UP THE EASTSIDE.

OF COURSE HE IS.

IS THAT THE BEST YOU GOT!?

BLAM BLAM

WHAT IS THAT, A GLOCK?

GONNA TAKE MORE THAN THAT TO HURT ME!

HERE! DON'T SAY I NEVER GAVE YOU NOTHING!

MIND IF I TAKE CARE OF THIS GUY FOR YOU?

BE MY GUEST!

NNH!

I WAS HOPING YOU'D SHOW UP!

I'VE BEEN STANDING OUT HERE YELLING LIKE A LUNATIC FOR ALMOST TWENTY MINUTES NOW!

SORRY TO--

GNNH!

THREE YEARS I SPENT LOCKED UP-- *BECAUSE OF YOU!*

I DIDN'T MAKE YOU ROB THAT BANK.

YEAH, BUT YOU--

C'MERE.

=WHEW=

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

HEY THERE.

IT'S HENRY, RIGHT?

UH... CAN I HELP YOU?

LET ME START OFF BY SAYING THAT IF *ANYTHING* HAPPENS TO ME, I RECORDED A LITTLE *"TELL-ALL"* VIDEO THAT WILL BE UPLOADED TO THE INTERNET.

RAINIER ROCKETS

SO KILLING ME WILL ONLY EXPOSE YOU.

KILLING YOU? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHO *ARE* YOU?

THAT'S A PERFECTLY REASONABLE QUESTION.

I DEBATED ABOUT WHETHER I SHOULD TELL YOU MY NAME. BUT I GUESS IT'S ONLY FAIR. AFTER ALL, I KNOW WHO *YOU* ARE...

...PARAGON.

NAME'S CALLUM FINNEY.

WHAT-- WHAT DID YOU JUST CALL ME?

RAINIER

OH MAN, YOU'RE GOOD. I LOVE THE SHOCK-- LIKE MAYBE YOU DIDN'T HEAR ME RIGHT. BUT YOU DID.

PARAGON.

THIS IS A JOKE, RIGHT? I ADMIT IT, NICE DELIVERY. YOU'RE DOING THIS ALL WITH A STRAIGHT FACE.

I'M NOT JOKING, HENRY.

YOU'RE PARAGON. YOU WORK AT SUBLIME ADVERTISING. YOU HAVE AN EX-WIFE NAMED NAOMI, AND TWO ADORABLE KIDS NAMED HANK AND ELLIE.

YOU--

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!

THINK ABOUT THIS! REMEMBER WHAT I SAID WHEN I CAME IN! ANYTHING HAPPENS TO ME, YOUR IDENTITY GOES PUBLIC!

NAOMI AND HANK AND ELLIE-- ALL YOUR ENEMIES WILL KNOW HOW TO GET AT YOU.

RAINIER

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

RAINIER ROCKETS

IT'S SIMPLE.

YOU'RE GONNA WORK FOR ME.

To Be Continued...

JAY FAERBER'S

ANTI-THESIS

WRITE TO: JAY.FAERBER@GMAIL.COM

Welcome to our first issue.

Some of you may know me from my Image super-hero books, like NOBLE CAUSES or DYNAMO 5. Or some of you may know me from my Image crime books, like NEAR DEATH or POINT OF IMPACT. I mention previous books of mine because in talking with folks at conventions or online, I noticed a common recurrence: certain people loved my super-hero books, but had no interest in the crime books. Others loved the crime books, but had no interest in the super-hero stuff. It occurred to me that I may be able to broaden my readership if I created a book that mixed the super-hero and crime genres. The result is ANTI-HERO.

Of course, that I'm nowhere near the first person to attempt such a merging. It's been happening almost as long as comics have been around. And more recently, guys like Ed Brubaker have done fantastic work on super-hero/crime books like INCOGNITO and SLEEPER. But ANTI-HERO is a new approach for me.

Armed with this concept, I started looking for an artist. I reached out to Paul Little, one of my favorite colorists (or colourist, as he would most likely correct me) to see if he knew of an artist who'd be a good fit for this type of project. He immediately had a name: Nate Stockman, an Irish artist Paul's worked with before. I was blown away by Nate's work, quickly reached out to him, and he quickly accepted. Paul, of course, was on board to color the project. For letters, I turned to Charles Pritchett, who's been lettering most of my books for over five years now. Last but not least is designer Tim Daniel, who came up with our super cool logo and trade dress, as well as the masthead on this text piece.

The final ingredient to this project was Monkeybrain Comics, the digital publisher that launched like a rocket last year, and hasn't slowed down since. A few months ago I released a comic with Monkeybrain called DENALI. It's a cool post-apocalyptic barbarian comic. You should check it out. It's cool. Anyway, my experience with Chris and Allison (the Monkey and the Brain, respectively) was so great that I wanted to do more with them. We're doing more DENALI, but the schedule's kind of loose. The entire creative team is working on numerous projects, so when we have time, we crank out a new little adventure.
With ANTI-HERO, we're committed to a rigorous schedule and I wanted to see just what kind of audience we could build for a pulpy serial with monthly doses. We're probably going to be doing 10 pages a month. This first issue was longer (16 pages), and the second issue is only 8, but from there on out we're probably going to settle into 10 pages each month. But if a certain story calls for us to diverge from that format, we can. That's one of the things digital frees us up to do.

Just because we're releasing the series initial via digital channels doesn't mean we're abandoning print altogether. I've got the entire first batch of stories already outlined, and our plan is to produce enough content to produce a print trade paperback (or hell, maybe a hardcover).

So that's a little background on ANTI-HERO. Going forward, this is a spot where I can answer fan mail (so please write!) and ramble on about crime books, TV shows, and comics I'm reading. Plus super-hero stuff, too. We're playing with both genres here, remember?

Some of my favorite super-hero stuff these days is coming from Mark Waid. I've known Mark casually since I first broke in at Marvel back in the late 90s. There was a lot I could learn from him then, and there's still a lot I can learn from him. He's one of the few guys who's been around in this industry forever, and is still at the top of his game. Last year I accompanied my fiancée to Korea, and read (digitally, of course) Waid's entire IRREDEEMABLE and INCORRUPTIBLE on the long flight. Fantastic stuff. And his current work on DAREDEVIL and THE INDESTRUCTIBLE HULK is equally inventive.

I'm also mourning the loss of Cartoon Network's YOUNG JUSTICE cartoon. I've been a fan of DC's teenage heroes for as long as I can remember, and this was a great take on them. It took me awhile to get used to Robin not being the leader of the team, but after the first few episodes I was fully engaged. And when they jumped ahead five years and expanded the roster, things really started coming together. It was great stuff, and I'm sorry we're not getting another season.

In addition to writing comics, I also write TV and I watch a ton of it. I love finding new shows (particularly in the crime genre) from other countries, and Hulu and Netflix make that easier than ever. Here are a few foreign imports that I can highly recommend.

ENDGAME (available on Hulu), a 13-episode Canadian series, is about a Russian chess master suffering from agoraphobia following the death of his wife. He locks himself inside a Vancouver hotel, where he solves crimes for money (to pay for his room, among other things). Various members of the hotel staff and a local chess enthusiast act as his legmen, chasing down leads. It's a smart, funny show. The kind of thing that would be right at home on USA or A&E.

LINE OF DUTY (available on Hulu) is a 5-episode British crime drama about a hotshot police detective investigated by Internal Affairs. The premise itself doesn't sound very distinguished, but the execution is fantastic. It's nicely nuanced with lots of nice shades of grey.

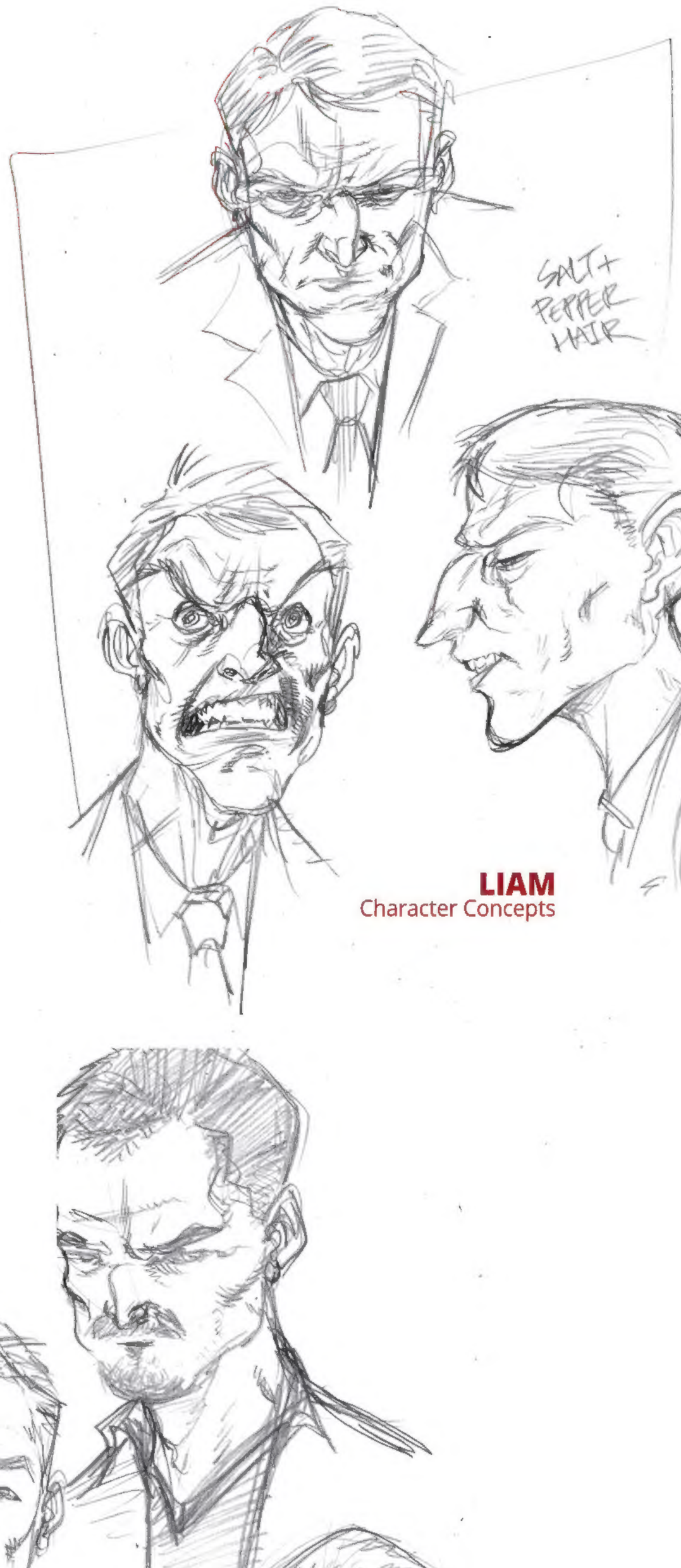
JACK TAYLOR (available on Netflix) adapted from Ken Bruen's mystery novels about Irish private eye Jack Taylor, an ex-cop. There are three 90-minute adaptations of three of Bruen's books available on Netflix at the moment. Great PI stuff, complete with Jack's voiceover.

Another Jack, JACK IRISH, based on a series of Australian mystery novels, is also pretty great. So far there have been two TV movies made starring Guy Pearce. They're available on DVD from Australia, so if you've got a region-free player (which are pretty affordable these days) you should grab them. Jack is a former lawyer who quit after his wife was killed by
one of his irate clients, and he now works as a sort of unlicensed private eye. I've seen both movies (there are two more on the way, according to the producer) and they're great fun.

That's all the room we have this month. Please drop us a line. We can chat about ANTI-HERO, or just super-hero and crime stuff in general. What are you reading/watching?

ANTI-HERO CONCEPT ART

CALLUM
Character Concepts



LIAM
Character Concepts

VARIOUS SMALL-TIME CROOKS
Character Concepts

ANTI-HERO CONCEPT ART

PARAGON
Masks, Hair and Cowl Concepts

ANTI-HERO CONCEPT ART

ABOUT THE CREATORS

JAY FAERBER is a Los Angeles-based writer. He got his start at Marvel and DC Comics in the late 1990s, where he worked on such series as *The Titans, New Warriors, Generation X*, and others. In 2001, he launched his first creator-owned series, *Noble Causes*, which has gone on to garner much critical acclaim. Since then, Faerber has carved out a niche for himself as a creator of independent comic books such as *Dodge's Bullets, Firebirds, Venture, Dynamo 5, Gemini, Near Death,* and *Point of Impact*. He currently works as a staff writer for the TV series Star-Crossed. You can follow him on Twitter ***@JayFaerber***.

NATE STOCKMAN is an Irish based freelance artist. He has worked on various sketch card sets for companies such as Upper Deck and 5Finity. His comics work includes *Pulp Girls* for Super Real Graphics, *Sheena* for Moonstone and the upcoming creator owned *Learning Curves* series. You can see more of his work at ***stockmanart.deviantart.com*** or follow him on Twitter ***@StockmanNate***.

PAUL LITTLE is a colorist and artist based in southern Ontario, Canada. He has colored comics for a wide variety of publishers, and some of his credits include *Five Weapons, No Place Like Home, I Love Trouble* and *Morning Glories* for Image Comics, *Pocket God* and *Fruit Ninja* for Ape Entertainment, and a whole lot more.

CHARLES PRITCHETT was brought up on the wrong side of the tracks in the bustling metropolis of Labrador City, Newfoundland Canada. Charles is really terrible at writing epic sounding biographies of his life and times, yet is a founding member of Frozen Beach Studios. Someday he will retire, think about writing his memoir and then put it off until it's too late. He enjoys a fine stew from time to time and hates to travel. He can be found at ***CharlesP.org***.

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